

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts
Council Meeting
Thursday, February 17, 2011
4:00 PM
RISCA Offices
Providence RI

Council Members Present: Bill Brackett, Chairman; Beverly Blais; Ann Clanton; Regina Partridge; Jean Rondeau; Mary K. Talbot and David Wax.

Council Members Unable to Attend: Mary K. Talbot, Secretary; Nancy Chapman; Dana Neugent; Carolyn Peck; Andrea Valentini and Carrie Zaslow.

Staff Members Present: Randall Rosenbaum, Executive Director; Steven Feinberg, Executive Director Film & Television; Sherilyn Brown, Education Director; Cristina DiChiera, Director Individual Artists & Public Art Program; Daniel Kahn, Asst. Education Program; Elizabeth Keithline, Project Grants for Organizations/ Public Art and Donna Fiske, Fiscal & Office Manager

Guest: Neville Vakharia and Ashley Berendt from the National Cultural Data Project

Chairman Bill Brackett called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

Approval of Minutes – December 8, 2010 Council meeting:

(Motion: Jean Rondeau; seconded by Nancy Chapman, approved unanimously)

Financial report for 2nd Quarter of FY11:

Mr. Rosenbaum reported that finances appear to be on track for the year. State grant money has, for the most part, been distributed. Personnel costs are where they should be at this point in the year. We will need to be cautious about spending of our operations funds.

(Motion: David Wax; seconded by Jean Rondeau, approved unanimously)

Report from Executive Director:

Mr. Rosenbaum reported on the visit of Rocco Landersman, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, on February 11th. Senator Sheldon

Whitehouse was the host, and he and his staff spent the day taking the Chairman on a tour of the state which included a community gathering at the Rhode Island Foundation and visits to the Rhode Island School of Design, Gallery Z, the Rhode Island Philharmonic, and Hope Artiste Village.

Cristina DiChiera reported on the Fellowship Exhibition in Westerly. It has been a very positive event. The Artists Cooperative Gallery of Westerly were excellent hosts and were very excited to have the Fellowship Exhibition there. The artists were happy with the press they have received.

Sherilyn Brown reported that the "Confessions of a Teenage Critic" will continue to air on Rhode Island PBS as long as we keep sending them material. The show will now be showing at 11AM on Sundays.

Ms. Brown reported that the Poetry Out Loud State Championship will be held on Saturday, February 26th at Bishop Hendricken High School in Warwick (free and open to the public).

Mr. Feinberg shared the new Production Guide from the Film Office with members of the Council. He reported that the series Body of Proof will be airing on March 29th. A new movie will begin filming in May or June. There is a potential for bringing a new ABC pilot to our state to film in March.

Old Business:

Neville Vakharia and Ashley Berendt from the Pew Charitable Trusts in Philadelphia presented a short demonstration of the Cultural Data Project, a program that Rhode Island will be joining in May 2011. This system is designed to gather cultural data from our applicants – and, in partnership with the Rhode Island Foundation, from their applicants as well – and will be of benefit to both funders and our constituents.

Mr. Rosenbaum reported to the Council that a letter has been received from the Rhode Island Airport Corporation that included a commitment to move forward on a public art project at the Intermodal Link at T.F. Green and to reestablish work on a number of RIAC-related public art projects that were suspended in 2007.

Elizabeth Keithline, Public Art Program Director, reported to the Council on an issue with "Rock Island Links" a work of art by artist Leni Schwendinger located

in the tunnel between the Westin Hotel and the Rhode Island Convention Center. The work has deteriorated over time, and the Convention Center Authority wants it removed. Ms. Keithline pointed out that there is no established deaccession policy for public art beyond what is established in our standard contract. The Council asked that Ms. Keithline continue to discuss this matter with both the artist and the Convention Center Authority and keep them informed.

Ms. Keithline reported that conversations were going on between RISCA and Rhode Island College on a plan for a series of short-term leases for their new Arts Building, rather than commissioning one large work. The Council asked for more information on such a plan, and Council member Regina Partridge volunteered to work with Ms. Keithline on this for the next Council meeting.

Ms. Keithline presented the recommendation of the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) public art selection panel for the new DMV building in the Howard Complex. Their choice for the public art commission is Rhode Island artist Erik Carlson, who proposed a series of interactive video installations in the DMV featuring scenes from highways and byways throughout the state.

A motion was made to approve the selection of Erik Carlson for the public art commission at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

(Motion: Regina Partridge; seconded by David Wax, approved unanimously)

New Business:

Approval of Grants:

Professional Artist Development grants:

There were no conflict of interest for these applicants.

A motion was made to accept the recommendations of the Professional Artist Development panel.

(Motion: Beverly Blais; seconded by David Wax, approved unanimously)

Request for support from RI Citizens for the Arts

The RI Citizens for the Arts sent a letter requesting support for a series of advocacy training programs throughout Rhode Island, concentrating on training the boards of non-profit arts organizations. The Council discussed this request. While the Council agreed that this training would be important for arts leaders to receive – particularly members of arts organization boards – the Council felt it would not be appropriate for it to financially support a project that had such a

clear connection to arts advocacy. In addition, the Council would be prevented from directly funding RI Citizen for the Arts given their status as a 501 c 4 organization.

Other reports

Liz Keithline reported that she has been working with both the Governor's Office and the General Treasurer's Office to place art by contemporary Rhode Island artists in their public spaces.

Mr. Rosenbaum reported that RISCA is working with the Governor's Office and the Department of Transportation on the commissioning and installation of murals along sections of the highway as part of a beautification and anti-graffiti effort.

Mr. Rosenbaum reported on the annual collaboration between the Tourism Office and RISCA on the upcoming Tourism Unity Luncheon, which will be held on Wednesday, May 11th at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick. RISCA will be awarding the first annual Arts in Tourism award and will feature artists and craftspeople at this luncheon, which brings together hundreds of people from the tourism industry in Rhode Island.

The Governor's Budget for FY12 will be unveiled on March 8th. RISCA is expecting some sort of reduction in support, and Mr. Rosenbaum will communicate with Council members once the budget has been made public.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting

(Motion: Beverly Blais; seconded by Nancy Chapman, approved unanimously)